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ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVES: To give teachers experience in business firms to help them improve teaching of vocational courses. DURATION: July-August 1970. AUDIENCE: Nine teacher participants are listed in the areas of business education, industrial arts, distributive education, industrial and technical education, occupational education, and guidance counseling. CURRICULUM: Details are not included, but participants were placed with the New York Telephone Company, IBM, Holiday Inns, insurance companies, and department stores. TEACHING METHODS: Formal teaching apparently was not involved, and experiences varied according to the company with which the participant was placed. MATERIALS OR FACILITIES: No special materials are identified. EVALUATION: The director states that participants benefited a great deal from the experience, enabling them to improve their teaching methods in business and vocational courses. MODIFICATIONS: Teacher participants made 11 recommendations for modifications in stipends, reimbursement for travel, communication with school districts, information for participating businesses, greater involvement of counselors, and diversification of the types of businesses participating. (MBM)

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"EVALUATION REPORT"

SUMMER PROGRAM (JULY-AUGUST 1970)

TEACHER COOPERATIVE-EXCHANGE PROGRAM  
EDUCATION PROFESSIONS DEVELOPMENT ACT (PART F)

Prepared By:

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Prepared For:

James Stratton  
Bureau of Inservice Education  
State Education Department  
Albany, New York

August 25, 1970

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TEACHER PARTICIPANTS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT OUTLET</u>	<u>TEACHING ASSIGNMENT</u>
Mrs Eileen M. Burns	Niagara Mohawk N.Y. Telephone Co.	Onondaga Central School Business Education
Mr. Robert Crull	Vega Industries Marsellus Casket Co. Chrysler Corporation Syroco Corporation Rockwell Corporation Crouse Hinds Co.	Nottingham High School Industrial Arts Instructor
Mr. Gary Marcus	Dey Brothers Dept. Store Edwards Dept. Store	Liverpool High School Distributive Education
Mr. William Markovitz	First Trust and Deposit Co.	Corcoran High School Business Education
Mrs. Jane McIntyre	Mutual of New York Agway	Central Tech High School Business Education
Mr. Michael E. Pallotta	Edwards Dept. Store Dey Brothers Dept. Store	Altmar-Parish Central School Business Education
Mr. Anthony Ranieri	Holiday Inns	Henninger High School Guidance Counselor
Mr. William Stewart	IBM	Binghamton North H.S. Industrial & Technical Education
Mr. Carl Stevens	Agway	Cato-Meridian Central School Occupational Education
Mrs. Ann P. Stone	Columbian Mutual Insurance IBM	Union-Endicott High School Business Education

DYNAMITE! EXCITING! FANTASTIC!

I wish every classroom teacher had such an opportunity! Until all teachers are aware of the marketplace - its opportunities, needs, pressures, horizons, limits - education will remain detached, isolated, unreal to the student who enters looking for his place.

\* Quote from Teacher Participant Evaluation Report

## RECOGNIZING THE PROBLEM

### Preparing "Young People" for the World of Work

Young people want and need to be involved in meaningful and satisfying employment upon graduation. This was clearly expressed by teacher participants in the program. The need for more vocational training and guidance resources in our schools was also emphasized as well as the urgency for developing services to help school dropouts and the large number of youth who cannot find full time employment.

#### Dialogue

...Students who are not able or not motivated to pursue education beyond high school find it difficult to meet job requirements because their vocational training is limited.

...More guidance counselors need to be concerned with vocational counseling. Junior high school years are not too early to begin discussing opportunities for vocational or career development. Involving a student in a vocational course of study in his freshman year of high school might dissuade him from dropping out of school.

...Youth need to find out what the working world is like before they become involved in a permanent working situation.

...Inexperienced job-seekers should know what responsibilities are related to different types of employment, how to develop good working relationships with fellow employees, and various employee benefits a job-seeker might look for.

...There should be some focus on orientation courses aimed at developing good work attitudes and habits.

...Respect for all skills and talents also must be promoted.

...Snobbish attitudes held by some class segments have swayed men and women to accept job that "sound good" in lieu of ones that fulfill individual interests and capabilities.

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

Teacher participants feel that they are making every effort to keep pace with the job scene for high school graduates and in attempting to do this have been astounded at the changes observed in each business or industrial outlet that they had been assigned to within the summer program.

Mechanization is part and parcel of all operations; to some degree, contributing to the routine and sometimes extending the activities involved. The speed of machine operations demands speed; therefore, efficiency and organization are controlled by the accuracy of this manual operation. These two qualities - speed and accuracy - become the basis for a successful operation. The challenge to the business education teacher is clear.

The old familiar requirements have remained the same. These include: responsibility and loyalty to the job, curiosity, enthusiasm, interest in relating one duty to another, good attendance, fitting in with others, adaptability to new situations, ambition reflected in willingness to work, basic skills in language (communications) and in mathematics were constantly emphasized by the employer or supervisor.

The teacher participant involvement with Niagara Mohawk points out two important factors:

1. Niagara Mohawk Corporation operates under a union agreement setting up a promotion policy that requires the company to post vacancies and select employees with necessary qualifications and most seniority, the screening of beginning applicants takes on an exaggerated importance. The implications for the employee is a "waiting game" in advancing on the job of his choice.
2. The size and technical nature of this company offers a range of jobs requiring a variety of talent, aptitudes, knowledge, skills, and interests. This provides unlimited opportunities for the employee, but also leaves him somewhat lost in the crowd.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CURRICULUM CHANGES

Curriculum changes are also absolutely essential to meet the needs of those students not interested in further education and who are facing up to job requirements. These students are not mere collectors of sufficient credits to graduate and the courses now defined in the syllabi of the various departments are not satisfactory or meaningful and do an injustice to the common sense of the ordinary high school student. Adjustments in course curriculum must be implemented which develop appropriate proficiency in the experiences which will mean success or failure in the world of work. These courses must be meaningful and realistic in order to motivate the learner and direct him to a career goal available to him in the marketplace.

All terminal high school students must be trained in basic concepts of numerical coding used in beginning clerical operations.

Ways and means of developing attitudes of responsibility and attention to details of a job station, efficient management of time and alertness for accuracy in processing information, good mental facility for relating and associating accumulated facts, curiosity and interest in perceiving the relationships of department functions within a concern.

In addition, the student must accumulate as many skills and specialized knowledges as possible to offer competition in the job market. This is particularly true when screening of applicants is very selective. The high school program can prepare such an applicant successfully only when he has sufficient intellectual ability. Also, all must be aware that education is a continuing process and be ready to take advantage of the many opportunities offered by industry to assist personnel in growing into more complicated and technical assignments as they progress along the career ladder.

The involvement with the New York Telephone Company points out some important factors:

1. The job station has a limited scope. Entry level jobs require limited and elementary knowledge and skills. They are saved from boredom by the standards of speed and accuracy required to meet deadlines necessary for the essential productivity of the department.
2. This company puts great stress on the quality and speed of all operations. Careful records - often computerized - are kept of each employee's and each department's achievements in the areas of speed and accuracy. Errors are always labeled by department and employee. These are matters for review in appraisal for promotion or dismissal.

Those knowledges and skills most frequently specified as being essential to a good job reflect the above factors. The employee needs good common sense and confidence in his performance which must be accurate and in many cases performed with great speed. His handwriting must legible and his work must be neat; spelling and correct transcribing of numbers and alphanumeric codes are matters of extreme importance. Alphabetizing and math - basic operations with the help of machines - must be done efficiently. His ability to relate and associate the information he works with to previous or subsequent processing in order to THINK through adjustments and problems that arise in his function is essential (a good memory). Concern and care in doing the job no matter how small with accuracy - "the chain breaks at the weakest link," and a realization that mistakes are costly - "there's never time to do it right, but there's always time to do it over," are important concepts. Good attendance is a MUST.

Machines are an integral part of clerical assignments. Skills necessary to the job station are carefully built up by a very elaborate and complete training program. The materials and personnel involved in training in this company is highly developed and functions in each department to establish the new employee in the position and bring him along through the higher level jobs in his department. There are also courses operated by the New York Telephone Company in Albany which provide a background for more complicated functions as the employee progresses into management jobs. In addition, correspondence courses are available to all employees interested. All of this training is without cost to the employee who is paid while being trained and supported when training takes him away from home. Any employee desiring to continue his education in an accredited college or school is further encouraged and assisted financially in this endeavor through an Aid to Education program.

One teacher participant feels that as a result of this program she will be better prepared to teach her classes in typewriting, shorthand, and office practice for the coming school year. There are many changes to incorporate. Perhaps the most important is a greater emphasis on numbers - practice in typing them accurately, writing them legibly, verifying them from source documents, appreciating their use as codes, the connotation of "fields" in them. Practice in working with IBM and mark sense cards - reading them, marking them, filing, etc. Greater use of role playing techniques in applying learning will be made; terms which have been collected - general as well as technical - will be included in working with vocabulary and spelling. These are only examples of the many ways in which plans are being made using the learnings of this program. Many materials have been collected which will help guide the student in finding satisfaction and challenge on the job in the business world. Industries will be involved in this area by inviting them to come to the school.

An important aspect of the experiences in this program is to find means to communicate the information that has been collected to other members of the school systems - in all departments and at all levels of teaching. Plans should be discussed with the administrators so that an opportunity to report will be set up. All educators must find ways to relate their body of learning to the real world of experience in which their students operate if education is to be any thing more than mental gymnastics. Academies may open doors but only a few are prepared to live out in its halls - the many are chained to the realities of survival and reach out to us for the means to meet their needs. At least we can give them this.

The following was observed on work with the "disadvantaged": Niagara Mohawk and New York Telephone have a wide range of cooperative activities in this area. Well established ties with Urban League, CORE, National Alliance of Businessmen, Boards of Education, Job Opportunity Commission, NDTA exist. Recruiting is stepped up in Negro colleges. With the companies, black employees get a close look with an effort to upgrade and promote or otherwise to assist employees in their adjustment to the work situation and future education when needed or desired. New training programs to upgrade skills are being developed. In both companies, management people have been assigned to coordinate work with the disadvantaged through social agencies.

The following are comments on attitudes:

College student (summer hire): "Too many people are uptight; we need a more casual approach - would cut down on ulcers, heart attacks, etc. We can still get the job done."

High School graduate: upgraded after nine months with Company, "How you come across to people as you move through a big company makes all the difference - smile, learn people's names, say hello, take an interest..."

Three year employee on her way up: "Take an interest in what you are doing no matter how small or unimportant the task may seem - try to see how it fits into the total picture."

Steno-typist in accounting: "Don't be afraid to try your skills; you may be good enough to please your boss, and it becomes easier as you go along."

Employer: "Common sense, a sense of responsibility, good attendance, willingness to try, We'll give the training. We have a company doctor and are prepared to give medical help to keep our employees in good working condition."

Employee: "I think classrooms should be run more like departments and teachers should be like supervisors. Our supervisor assigns the work,

explains how to do it and then leaves you alone to do it."

Supervisor: "In general, I try to impress on the new employee the importance of attendance, punctuality, and personal job responsibility."

Supervisor: "I set realistic levels of progress and show how to attain them. I don't care how well trained an employee is, if he's not here, he's worthless. Getting off on the right foot is so important. The new employee seems surprised that you expect them to be there, on time and to produce."

Employee: I am sorry I didn't take shorthand in high school. Now I'm a clerk-typist, but if a secretary job opened up I wouldn't qualify for it. A guidance counselor told me that I should not take shorthand - that big offices won't be using it any more because of dictaphone machines. He was wrong. If I had taken it I could apply for a secretary's job."

Supervisor: "The new employee should be ready for anything. If they are hired as clerk-typists and you ask them to file they get their backs up."

In preparing students for success in the business field, standards should be kept high in the skill subjects shorthand and typing. On the job near perfect performance is demanded. Letters that are not absolutely accurate and perfect in appearance are simply not accepted.

The importance of attendance and punctuality cannot be stressed too often. It is vital. It is repeated so constantly and so forcefully that it is felt that it should be included as part of the grade received in a business subject.

Both supervisors and employees feel that senior business subjects should simulate office situations as closely and as often as possible. Here practice sets are of much more value than workbooks.

Much more emphasis should be placed on work-flow type of classroom activity.

Classroom activities to detail should be stressed in every subject. On the job it's not good enough to have just "the general idea."

We should encourage greater participation by the students in "running" the classroom - keeping records, general order, manntaining files, charts, buddy system of instruction for absentees.

Exercises in human potential should be used to increase the students' feeling of self-worth so that he can function to his maximum potential effectively in the business situation.

Students should be reminded that they will be expected to give a full day's work (and be paid for it).

Another comment from a teacher participant who was assigned to Mutual of New York and Agway was as follows:

"I found this experience invaluable as a business teacher. To see what entry level jobs entail, to talk with supervisors and recent graduates and to receive constructive criticisms from all areas has given me ideas and practical information I could never have learned in a university course. No textbook is as up to date as the actual scene."

A teacher participant at IBM and Columbian Mutual gained the following:

1. Good general background on the types of jobs available and job requirements for beginning employees in a medium size business and a very large business.
2. Insights into management's feelings on a great number of subjects relevant to the secretarial field.
3. Insights into permanent employee's feelings on the same.
4. An awareness of modern business practices.
5. An awareness of business machines used.
6. An awareness that the business world is changing and we need to be ready for it and train our students for it.
7. An increased realization of the importance of a good work attitude, and good personal interaction with all types of people-managers, fellow workers, young and old.

The following recommendations were made on the basis of her observations:

1. A survey should be made immediately of the area businesses to determine what is used by secretarial and clerical employees. A reappraisal of the school's equipment should be made in order to make ordering of equipment more relevant to the business world.
2. Information should be disseminated to students by all department members at appropriate times after this information has been given to department members on the following subjects: pay scales, attitudes, equipment, types of forms, letterheads, erasing, office procedures.
3. An increased training in vocabulary - general and technical - is necessary. Data Processing equipment in many forms is being used in many local business and students need to know the vocabulary connected with it.

4. The purchase, rental, or borrowing of a Teletrainer that has Push Button telephones to train students in the use of telephone equipment and procedures would be most beneficial. This will make them a little less apprehensive on arrival at a business concern.
5. Teachers should discuss with students personal interaction with all types of people so that they can understand people better.
6. There should be increased use of making carbon copies and form typing. With the use of a Thermofax copier, copies of forms can be made for use in the classes. The purchase of copy sets would greatly increase student's job readiness.
7. The guidance department should make a survey of graduates for the past five years to see:
  - a. Years spent in college
  - b. Kinds of employment
  - c. etc.
8. An increased emphasis should be placed on proofreading.
9. All students should have at least one-half year of typing. The use of terminals in even the manufacturing areas, order and purchasing areas for the men, as well as the office areas in general will require knowledge of the keyboard.

Another quote from a teacher participant as to the merits of this program is as follows:

"One of the most valuable experiences I have had the privilege of being involved with is the way I feel about this six-week program." The assignment to IBM Endicott for six weeks provided an opportunity to update machine shop experience and enlarge manufacturing background. The success of IBM is truly the result of the belief in the individual worth of every employee and a sincere desire to give that employee a chance to develop and achieve success. The insight into the educational programs available to the employees was a very valuable part of this assignment. It provided many valuable suggestions for improvement in teaching assignments; viz. mathematics and science related to machine shop courses. It also reaffirmed the value of trade and technical programs in our schools.

Teacher participants are also planning to have discussions with fellow teachers about the coming school year and where IBM is concerned (at Endicott) plan on setting up a program of visits by IBM people who have volunteered to give the school the benefit of their knowledge in many areas. These contacts

will be valuable to both teachers and pupils. In department meetings with other teachers an attempt to acquaint them with the feelings of industry about the high school program and to "pass on" the many suggestions that were received from Business and Industry people should be made. Some of these suggestions are as follows:

1. Mathematics is vital to advancement.
2. Good human relationships should be understood by pupils and teachers as a vital part of the education process.
3. Mechanical drawing and a basic understanding of precision measurement would be helpful to many job applicants at entry level.
4. Technically trained graduates from high school or two year or four year college are naturally given special consideration for higher entry levels of employment.
5. Educational leaves of absence, tuition refunds to employees for many college courses, up-to-date information on degree programs in 25 area colleges and full cooperation with the School of Advanced Technology at SUNY Binghamton are some of the many ways in which industry is cooperating with employees.

Teacher participants who were assigned to retail stores made the following comments:

1. Selling techniques - students should have a thorough knowledge of how to sell. The steps of a sale and especially how to use suggestive or plus sell is important.
2. Product information - students should be given some basic information in textiles and non-textiles. Many employees have to learn this on their own after securing a sales position. This can take months. Students should at least be aware of where this information can be obtained.
3. Work Block or Co-op Program - the students felt that such a program was of real value to them. It helped them to understand the relevancy to their classroom work and at the same time doubled their learning experiences.

As to what types of information and methods that will be used because of this program, the following are examples.

1. More time will be spent in developing selling techniques. It was observed that most sales people did not know how to close a sale

but rather waited for the customer to do so.

2. 2. More community people will be asked to become involved in the classroom. From those people in the two outlets, it is obvious that many are willing and even anxious to do so. The possibility of having an advisory board to help the D.E. teacher develop curriculum and expand the co-op program is also valid.
3. To develop the knowledge of merchandise information, the use of a merchandise manual will be used. This will be a book of information about a product or group of products that the student chooses.
4. The school store will be re-organized so that it runs as closely to the operation of a real store as is possible. This will mean setting up groups of students into departments and shifting students around so that they get some experience in each area.
5. Time must be spent exploring the area of data processing, not necessarily in the form of a unit but rather an attempt to discuss the matter where ever appropriate in the curriculum.
6. New terms in retailing will be used as observed this summer.
7. Students will be able to better develop creativity by developing more displays and allowing the students to work with raw materials in constructing them.
8. More time will be spent in developing the skills concerned with the important area of telephone sales.

The participant observing at Agway found that the operation there related very closely to the teaching involved in vocational agriculture.

Most of the student graduates should be well oriented, if not really trained, to understand much of the work done by employees of Agway. Many of the basic skills presently taught in this course entitled "Farm Production and Management" apply to the work in Agway, particularly to that portion dealing with farmers.

More practice with "calculators" and "adding machines" would be good basic skills to acquire for working in all Agway stores.

Ideas for several instructional units to include in the "Farm Production and Management" course are to be implemented for this coming fall. Also a new unit dealing with job application and interview will be introduced.

Other recommendations are as follows:

1. A revised unit on "Co-operatives" as a way of doing business. A copy of the "Agway History Course" has been supplied by Agway which will provide good resource material for understanding the principles of co-operatives.
2. Introduce a short unit on poultry - including the trends for large units to locate in Cayuga county. Approximately 40-50% of the volume of feed sold during the past year was for poultry.
3. A unit dealing with the formulation of a blend mix or fertilizer. It is planned here to invite Agway personnel into the school to work with the classes.
4. A possible demonstration of a fertilizer spreader truck combined with a calibration check. An Agway driver has indicated that he would like to co-operate with the classes in this line of work. This would be a good demonstration to use on the school farm that is run by Agway.
5. More use of adding machines by students in figuring their records.
6. To encourage agriculture students to take a business course.
7. A need for emphasis on credit problems, business statements, etc., appears evident. A unit on securing credit and borrowing money is already being offered which could be tailored to include some business credit.

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8. The teacher-participant also plans to pass on to the administrators in his district the information regarding possible changes in course offerings.
9. The summary of the summer experiences will be passed on to the other agriculture teachers in the county. Arrangements will be made for monthly teacher meetings whose teaching assignments are in Agriculture
10. It is important to become acquainted with people working in related agricultural work and calling on them for resource information.
11. Contact was made and orientation sessions took place related to the Agway manager training program. (It is an "on the job" program averaging about six months in length.) This is an entry level job for a college trained person.
12. The possibility arises of developing an Experimental farm for the Cayuga County B.O.C.E.S.. Plans have been started for a series of meetings between B.O.C.E.S. and Agway personnel to check further into this project.

The Industrial-Arts Teacher participant made the following observations:

1. The schools should do their duty in stressing the importance of good attendance, being to work on time, cleanliness, neat appearance, respect and responsibility. (He found that these traits are given heavy consideration in hiring and promotions.)
2. The six-industrial outlets assigned to this one participant have supplied enough knowledge to teach twenty-five forty minute classes at high school level. (These lessons will be used to instruct a mini course along with the regular subject assignment.) These lessons are aimed to educate students toward a better job selection.

The teacher participant in answering the question "How do you plan to communicate your experiences with other personnel in the school district?" plans the following:

1. Most of the experiences will be summarized in lesson plans. Some of the topics will overlap other courses. Copies of these lessons can be distributed to teachers connected with each topic.
2. The experience in industry can be the topic of one of the district department meetings.
3. The school counselors can view the revised lesson plans or attend industrial arts classes.
4. The school principal cleared the teaching of a mini course on occupations to be taught for approximately five weeks.
5. Assemblies give the greatest total coverage of the student body, teachers, and administration in the shortest period of time and least cost. One should be organized to tour the four high school of the City of Syracuse School District.
6. Local industry lend plant films to schools to familiarize plant operations to outsiders.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ANOTHER YEAR!"

(From Teacher Participants)

1. Salary monies due participants must be paid as originally outlined and proposed.
2. Consideration of reimbursements for parking fees and extensive car travel.
3. Establish earlier and much better communication with local school districts about the program.
4. Involve more counselors or give some credit toward counseling requirements to participants.
5. Establish some guide lines to acquaint more teachers with the requirements for individual co-op programs.
6. Information should reach individual schools earlier so that teachers could make their summer plans more conveniently.
7. Information should be clearer as to what the program entails. Participants did not realize from the advance information that the program was to be
8. Periods of time in any one business should be of one, two, or three week duration. Other types of business offices that would be of benefit to a business teacher would be: attorney, medical center, hospital, college, and department store.
9. Stipends should be more for single people or for those with few dependents. It should not vary so much because of dependents. All the participants are doing the same type of work --it has nothing to do with being prolific.
10. For those who must travel considerable distance to the workshops, there should be some reimbursement for travel expenses. Four or five 80-90 mile trips can be quite costly. A stay overnight for two-day workshops would be more costly than the extra trip but a little less wear and tear on the individual.
11. Information to participating businesses should be made clearer and in writing as to the purpose of the program. In turn, the participating business should make the purpose of the program in writing clear to each person who will be coming into contact with the participant. A written background of the participant of his interests and experiences would be of help to the business in scheduling. This could be furnished by the individual himself.

12. Each participant should be able to suggest the local businesses in which he feels he would gain the most benefit as that person may know the local businesses best.

DIRECTOR'S REMARKS

In making this report, I have taken many excerpts and writings from the ten reports submitted by the teacher-participants.

I am sure that these people have benefitted a great deal from this experience and that they have been very sincere, aggressive, and very sure and confident that this summer project will ultimately help them do a better job of preparing young people for the "world of work".

Their written comments must be taken seriously and with an "open mind" as they are actually the "builders" of this kind of program and the director is the "architect" who, with the plans in hand, can direct, guide, evaluate progress and make sure the "builders" are going in the direction intended.

As one participant wrote:

"As a result of this program, 1970 will be remembered as a year in which a pilot program was developed that furnished the base for programs in other states and the impetus to bridge the gap between education and industry, thus easing the transition between student and employee."

IT IS A TRUE STATEMENT WHEN WE SAY THAT "JOBS ARE CRITICAL IN ORDER TO ATTACK OUR NATION'S PROBLEMS."